

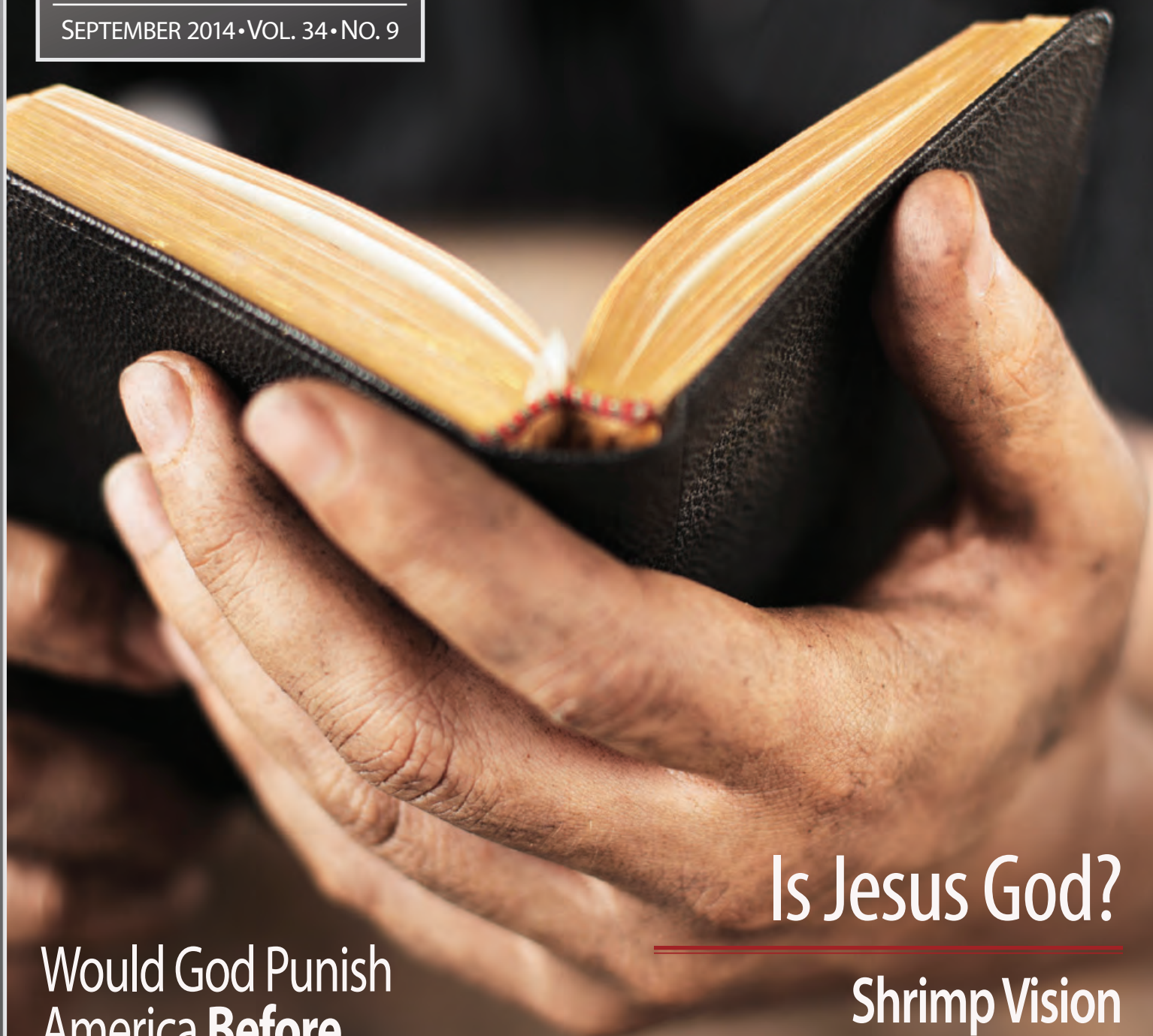


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The Nature of Bible **INSPIRATION**

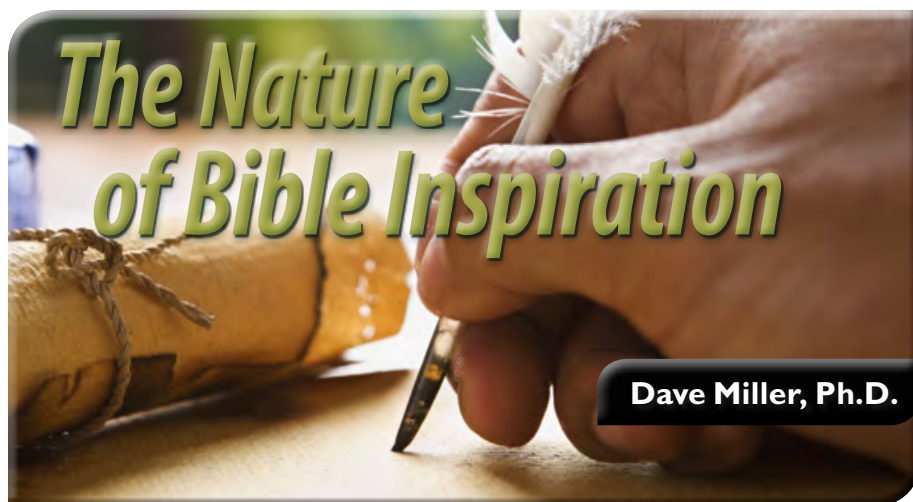


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WHAT does it mean to say: “The Bible is inspired”? Answers to this question are legion (cf. “Theories...,” 1864, 6:312-349). Some regard the Bible as “inspired” in the same way that great authors in history have risen above the average person in their literary pursuits, e.g., Homer, Shakespeare, Dickens, or Eliot. Others would say that the writers of the Bible were influenced by supernatural connections, but that their written records of those connections suffer from the same flaws that mere humans are prone to make. Many people fail to assess the Bible’s own claims regarding its inspiration. Before the Bible can be determined to be “inspired,” it is necessary to conceptualize the meaning and nature of that inspiration. The Bible literally is filled with descriptions of the essence of its own inspiration.

Paul boldly claimed, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16). The Greek term underlying the word “inspiration” means “God-breathed” (Vincent, 1900, 4:317). Paul was affirming that Scripture, referring primarily to the Old Testament, is the product of the breath of God. God actually breathed out the Scriptures. The Bible is **God’s Word**—not man’s—though He used man to produce them. Three verses later (4:2), Paul declared, “Therefore...preach the

word...” Why? Because it is **God’s Word**. Just as surely as God’s breath brought the Universe into existence (Psalm 33:6), so the Bible is the result of God’s out-breathing.

Peter alluded to the momentous occasion of Christ’s transfiguration when God literally spoke from heaven directly to Peter, James, and John (2 Peter 1:19-21). God orally boomed forth His insistence that Jesus is His beloved Son, and human beings are commanded to listen to Him (Matthew 17:5). Peter then declared, “We also have the prophetic word made more sure,...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.” Peter was saying that the Scriptures provided to us by the prophets are just as certain, and just as authoritative, as the voice of God that spoke on the mount of transfiguration.

Peter further explained that the prophetic word, meaning the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, did not originate on its own, or in the minds of those who wrote them (the meaning of “private interpretation”). Scripture did not come from “the will of man.” Scripture was not the result of human research or human investigation into the nature of things. Scripture was not the product of its writers’ own thinking (Warfield, 1974, 3:1474). Where, then, did Scripture come from? Peter claimed, “but holy men of

God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” The word “moved” in the original language is the usual word for being “carried” or “brought” (Arndt and Gingrich, 1957, pp. 862-863), hence, to be moved or under a moving influence (Perschbacher, 1990, p. 427). Peter was stating that the Holy Spirit, in essence, **picked up** the writers, the prophets, and brought them to the goal of **His** choosing (Warfield, 3:1475). That means that the Scriptures, though written by means of human instrumentality, were so superintended by God that the resulting writings are truly God’s.

This same Peter, while awaiting the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2 on Pentecost, stood up among fellow disciples and declared, “Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas,” and then he quoted from the Psalms (Acts 1:16ff.). Peter affirmed that the Holy Spirit governed what David wrote, and the results of David’s writing therefore are designated as “Scripture.”

This same Peter, in 1 Peter 1:10-12, explained: (1) that the inspired spokesmen of the Old Testament did not always understand all the information given by God through them; (2) it was the Spirit of Christ that was operating upon them; (3) this same inspired information was being presented in Peter’s day by the apostles; and (4) the same Holy Spirit was directing their utterances. It is very important to note that Peter was claiming that inspired men had **their own minds engaged** as they produced inspired material, but **the product was God’s**, since they did not always grasp all of the significance of their own productions.

This same Peter, in 2 Peter 3:15-16, referred to “our beloved brother Paul” as having “written to you.” He then noted: “as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things,

in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.” Peter made clear three salient points: (1) Paul wrote epistles; (2) those epistles are classified with “the other Scriptures,” which means that Paul’s letters are **Scripture** every bit as much as the Old Testament and other New Testament writings; and (3) these writings are divinely authoritative, since to twist them is to invite “destruction”—an obvious reference to **God’s** disfavor and the spiritual/eternal harm that results from disobeying **God’s** words, not man’s words. Cornelius well-understood this principle, for when Peter came to his house, he stated: “Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things **commanded you by God**” (Acts 10:33, emp. added).

While on Earth, Jesus demonstrated a high regard for Scripture, i.e., the Old Testament. On one occasion, He involved Himself in an interchange with some Jews who accused Him of blasphemy (John 10:33). He repelled the charge by quoting Psalm 82:6, referring to the passage as “**law**” (vs. 34). But how could Jesus refer to a psalm as “law,” since the Psalms were poetic wisdom literature and not a part of the Torah (the Pentateuch)? He referred to a psalm as “law” in the sense that the Psalms are part of Scripture. Jesus was thus ascribing **legal authority** to the entire corpus of Scripture (Warfield, 3:1475). He did the same thing in John 15:25. Likewise, Paul quoted from the Psalms, Isaiah, and Genesis and referred to each as “the Law” (1 Corinthians 14:21; Romans 3:19; Galatians 4:21).

After Jesus quoted from a psalm and called it “law,” He added, “and the Scripture cannot be broken” (vs. 35). Notice that He was equating “law” with “Scripture”—using the terms as synonyms. When He declared

that “law,” or “Scripture,” “cannot be broken,” He was making the point that it is impossible for Scripture to be annulled, for its authority to be denied, or its truth to be withstood (Warfield, 3:1475). Jesus considered every part of Scripture, even its most casual phrases, to be the authoritative Word of God (p. 1476).

This attitude toward Scripture as an authoritative document is intimated by the customary formula: “It is written.” For example, when facing Satan, Jesus repelled his attacks all three times with a simple, “It is written,” which was sufficient to establish authoritative credibility (Matthew 4:4,7,10)—so much so that Satan attempted to copy Jesus in this respect (Matthew 4:6). After His resurrection, Jesus equated the entire Old Testament (i.e., the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms) with “Scripture,” and again noted “it is written” (Luke 24:44-46). He insisted very emphatically that “all things” in the Scriptures concerning Himself “must be fulfilled.” Earlier in the chapter, He equated “Moses and all the prophets” with “the Scriptures” (vss. 25-27).

No wonder Jesus would rebuke His religious challengers with such

phrases as, “Have you not read even this Scripture?” (Mark 12:10; cf. Matthew 21:42); or, “You do err, not knowing the Scriptures” (Matthew 22:29); or, “if you had known what this means...” (Matthew 12:7); or, “Go and learn what this means...” (Mark 9:13). The underlying thought in such pronouncements is that **God’s truth is found in Scripture**, and if you are ignorant of the Scriptures, you are susceptible to error. Jesus therefore was affirming that God is the Author of Scripture.

Even the words of Scripture that do not constitute direct quotes of deity are, in fact, the words of God. For example, Jesus assigned the words of Genesis 2:24 to God as the author (Matthew 19:4-6). Yet, in the original setting of Genesis 2:24, no indication is given that God was the speaker. Rather, the words are simply narratorial comment written down by the human author—Moses. By Jesus attributing the words to God, He was making clear that the whole of Scripture was authored by God. That means that even the words of Satan, or the words of evil people, are the words of God—in the sense that God has given us an accurate report of what those people said.

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Paul treated the matter in the same way (1 Corinthians 6:16).

Over and over again, the apostles and writers of the New Testament did the same thing that Jesus did, i.e., they referred to Scripture in such a way that it was clear they considered it to be the authoritative, inspired words of God (e.g., Acts 8:35; 17:2; 18:28; 26:22; Romans 12:19; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Peter 1:16; James 2:8). Perhaps Luke well summarized the prevailing mindset of the Bible writers: “[T]hey received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, to find out whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). In other words, **what Scripture says, God says.**

Additional evidence of the Bible’s own view of itself is manifested in statements like, “For the Scripture says to Pharaoh” (Romans 9:17), or “And the Scripture...preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand” (Galatians 3:8). But Scripture did not speak to Pharaoh, and Scripture did not preach the Gospel to Abraham. Rather, God did! So the word of Scripture is the word of God! The inspired writers of the New Testament considered “God” and “Scripture” to be so closely linked that they could naturally speak of “Scripture” doing what Scripture records God as doing (Warfield, 3:1477).

It works the other way as well. God is said to say certain things that are, in their original setting, merely words of Scripture. For example, Hebrews 3:7 reads, “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says...,” and Psalm 95:7 is then quoted. In Acts 4:25, God is said to have spoken, by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David, the words of Psalm 2:1. In Acts 13:34-35, God is represented as having stated the words of Isaiah 55:3 and Psalm 16:10. Yet, in both of these cases, the words attributed to God are not, in their original setting, specifically His words, but merely the words of Scripture itself.

So the writers of the New Testament sometimes referred to the Scriptures as if they were God, and they sometimes referred to God as if He were Scripture. The Bible thus presents itself as the very words of God.

In Hebrews 1:5-13, the writer quoted seven Old Testament passages: Psalm 2:7; 2 Samuel 7:14; Deuteronomy 32:43; Psalm 104:4; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 102:25-27; and Psalm 110:1. The Hebrews writer attributed each of these passages to God as the speaker. Yet in their original setting in the Old Testament, sometimes God **is** the speaker, while sometimes He is **not** the speaker, and is, in fact, being spoken **to** or spoken **about**. Why would the writer of Hebrews indiscriminately assign all of these passages to God? Because they all have in common the fact that they are the words of Scripture, and, as such, are the words of God.

The same is true with Romans 15:9-12 where Paul quoted from Psalm 18:49, Deuteronomy 32:43, Psalm 117:1, and Isaiah 11:10. The first one he introduced with the formula “as it is written”; the second one is introduced by “again he says”; the third with simply “again”; and the fourth is prefaced with “Isaiah says.” Yet, in the Old Testament setting, only in the Isaiah passage is specifically God talking—and Paul assigns those words to Isaiah. So “it is written,” “he says,” and “Isaiah says,” are all different ways of saying the same thing, i.e., “**God says**”! Sometimes the New Testament writers assigned Scripture to its human authors. Yet it is clear that when the writers said, “Moses said,” or “David said,” such was simply another way to say, “Scripture says,” which, again, was the same thing as saying “God says.”

VERBAL INSPIRATION

NOTICE that the inspiration that the Bible claims for itself is “**verbal**” inspiration, i.e., God’s superintendence extends even to

the **words** of the writer. Paul based his argument on a plural noun, and insisted that God intended the word to be understood in its singular sense (Galatians 3:16). As noted previously, Jesus based an argument on the precise verbal form of Scripture (John 10:34). He based His point on a particular **word** in Matthew 22:43, on a particular **tense** in Matthew 22:32, and even on the **letters** and their minute strokes in Matthew 5:17-18. In the latter passage, Jesus said that Exodus 3:6 was spoken to the Sadducees with whom He was conversing—even though the original context of Exodus 3:6 has God speaking to Moses. That proves that Jesus expects all people on Earth to understand that the Bible is written to every single accountable human being, and that Scripture is intended to be **authoritative** for human living.

Paul also affirmed verbal inspiration in 1 Corinthians 2. He claimed that his speech and his preaching were not “words of human wisdom” (vs. 4). Rather, his words were “in demonstration of the Spirit.” He claimed that he and his fellow apostles were speaking the wisdom of God (vs. 7). He claimed that the things which they had been speaking were revealed to them by God through the Holy Spirit (vs. 10). Then he affirmed very clearly: “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches” (vs. 13). So inspiration involves the very **words**, and that makes it **verbal** inspiration.

NEW TESTAMENT INSPIRATION

MOST of the passages examined thus far are New Testament references to the inspiration of the Old Testament. Liberal scholars have claimed that the New Testament does not make the claim of inspiration for itself. That claim is not true. As already noted, in 2 Peter 3:16, Peter classified Paul’s epistles as “Scripture,” and he affirmed that Paul’s writings

carry such divine authority that those who twist them will be destroyed. It also was noted that Peter linked the apostles with the Old Testament prophets (1 Peter 1:10-12). And, as just seen, Paul made a comparable claim in 1 Corinthians 2.

As one reads the New Testament, it is clear that the writers made the extension of Old Testament inspiration to their own writings. They did not for a moment consider themselves—the ministers of the new covenant (2 Corinthians 3:6)—to be less in possession of the Spirit of God than the ministers of the old covenant (Warfield, 3:1482). Jesus, without question, declared the impending inspiration of the authors of the New Testament. In Matthew 10:17-20, and the parallels in Mark 13:11 and Luke 12:12, Jesus explained to the apostles that the Holy Spirit would direct their verbal activities in terms of both **how** and **what** they spoke. He reiterated the same thing in Luke 21:12-15, urging them not to worry how to defend themselves when hauled before the authorities, since He would provide them with “a mouth and wisdom” that their adversaries would not be able to withstand. So Jesus **pre-authenticated** the teaching of the apostles, and insured respect for their authority.

Jesus directed several promises to the apostles in John chapters 14, 15, and 16. Allusion to just one of these will suffice. Jesus promised the apostles: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come” (John 16:12-13). Just prior to His ascension, Jesus promised to the apostles the impending baptism of the Holy Spirit, which would enable them to be Christ’s witnesses throughout

the world (Acts 1:5,8). This promise commenced its fulfillment in Acts 2 when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit and empowered to preach the message God wanted preached.

Numerous passages indicate the fulfillment of these promises to the apostles to the extent that the words which they spoke were **God’s** words (Acts 4:8,31; 5:32; 15:8,27-28; 16:6-8). As already noted, Paul claimed direct guidance of the Holy Spirit for the words that he spoke (1 Corinthians 2). He did the same thing in Galatians 1:12. In Ephesians 3:1-5, he claimed that his message was made known to him “by revelation” (vs. 3), along with the other apostles and prophets (vs. 5). Other passages reflect the same point (1 Timothy 4:1; Galatians 2:2; 2 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). A good summary of Paul’s claims to inspiration is seen in his firm declaration: “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:37). His inspiration extended to both his **oral** utterances as well as his **writings** (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6,14; cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:2,15; Galatians 1:7-8). In 1 Timothy 5:18, Paul quoted Luke 10:7 and referred to it as “Scripture.” So Luke’s Gospel record was already available and classified with the inspired canon of Scripture.

CONCLUSION

THE unbiased individual can easily see that the Bible claims for itself the status of “inspiration,” having been breathed out by God Himself. That inspiration entailed such superintendence by God that even the **words** came under His influence. Thus the Bible is “verbally inspired.” This conclusion does not imply that the writers merely took “dictation.” Rather, the Bible indicates

that God adapted His inspiring activity to the individual temperament, vocabulary, educational level, and stylistic idiosyncrasies of each writer. The Bible is “infallible” in that it is incapable of deceiving or misleading, and is therefore completely trustworthy and reliable. “Plenary” inspiration means that inspiration extends to all of its parts. Thus the Bible is **fully** inspired.

The Bible is also “inerrant,” that is, it is free of error. God used human beings to write the Bible, and in so doing, allowed them to leave their mark upon it, but without making any of the mistakes that human writings are prone to make. God made certain that the words produced by the human writers were free from the errors and mistakes characteristic of uninspired writers. This influence even extended to matters of science, geography, and history. Proof for the inspiration of the Bible is a separate and necessary inquiry. However, it is important that a person understand what the Bible means when it claims for itself “inspiration.”

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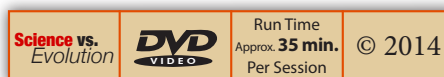
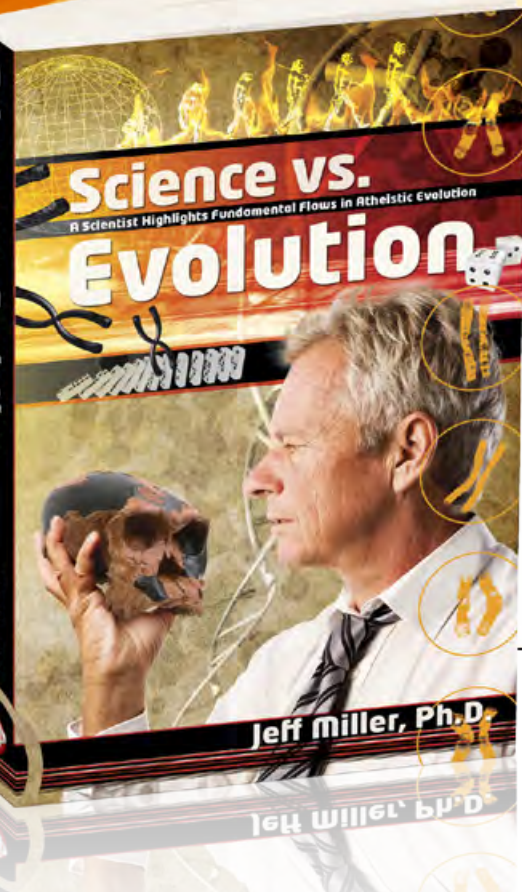
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THE Bible is full of scriptures that, when quoted without any consideration of the immediate and remote contexts, a person can misuse in all sorts of ways. As proof that we do not have to work to provide for our family's material needs, some may quote Jesus' statement, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life" (John 6:27). In order to show that Jesus was a liar, the Bible critic might quote Jesus' acknowledgment: "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true" (John 5:31). Those who exclude baptism from God's plan of salvation often quote John 4:2: "Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples." When the Bible reader is "rightly dividing" (2 Timothy 2:15, NKJV) or "handling accurately the word of truth" (NASB), however, he will remember that "[t]he **sum** of thy [God's] word is truth" (Psalm 119:160, emp. added). Since the Bible teaches "if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10; cf. 1 Timothy 5:8), Jesus never implied that working to help feed one's family is wrong (John 6:27). "He simply was saying that spiritual food is more important than physical food, and as such, should

be given a **higher** priority" (Butt, 2003, emp. in orig.). Jesus did not confess wrongdoing in John 5:31. He simply acknowledged that, in accordance with the law (cf. Deuteronomy 19:15), His testimony apart from other witnesses would be considered invalid or insufficient to establish truth (cf. John 8:13-20; see Lyons, 2004). Likewise, Jesus never taught that baptism was unnecessary for salvation. In fact, He taught the very opposite (cf. John 3:3,5; Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:18-20; see Lyons, 2003).

Consider another proof text from the Gospel of John regarding the nature of Christ. Some (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses) contend that Jesus was not deity since, on one occasion, He prayed to the Father: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3; cf. "Should You Believe...?", 2000). Allegedly, by calling the Father, "the only true God," Jesus excluded Himself from being deity. Such an interpretation of John 17:3, however, contradicts numerous other passages within John's own gospel account. From beginning to end, John bore witness to the deity of Christ. Some

of the evidence from the Gospel of John includes the following:

- In the very first verse of John, the apostle testified: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**" (emp. added; cf. 1:14,17).
- Two verses later the reader learns that "[a]ll things came into being by Him [the Word], and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" (John 1:3, NASB).
- Still in the first chapter of John, the apostle testified that John the Baptizer was the one whom Isaiah foretold would "prepare... the way of Jehovah" (Isaiah 40:3; John 1:23; cf. 14:6). For Whom did John the Baptizer come to prepare the way? Isaiah called Him "Jehovah." The apostle John, as well as John the Baptizer, referred to Jehovah as "Jesus" (John 1:17), "the Christ" (3:28), "the Word" (1:1), "the Light" (1:17), "the Lamb" (1:29), "the Truth" (5:33), etc.
- When the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well told Jesus, "I know that Messiah is coming" (John 4:25), Jesus responded, "I who speak to you am He" (vs. 26). Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would be called "Mighty God" (9:6) and "Jehovah" (40:3). Thus, by claiming to be the Messiah, Jesus was claiming to be God.
- In John chapter nine, Jesus miraculously healed a man with congenital blindness (vs. 1). When this man appeared before various Jews in the synagogue and called Jesus a prophet (vs. 17), he was instructed to "give glory to God," not Jesus, because allegedly Jesus "is a sinner" (vs. 24). Later, after the man born blind was cast out of

the synagogue, he confessed faith in Jesus and **worshiped** (Greek *proskuneo*) Him (vs. 38). In the Gospel of John, this word (*proskuneo*) is found 11 times: nine times in reference to worshiping the Father (John 4:2-24), once in reference to Greeks who came to “worship” in Jerusalem during Passover (12:20), and once in reference to the worship Jesus received from a man whom He had miraculously healed, and who had just confessed faith in Jesus. Indeed, by accepting worship Jesus acknowledged His deity (cf. Matthew 4:10; Hebrews 1:6).

- While at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, Jesus claimed: “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30). “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him” (vs. 31). Why did Jesus’ enemies want to stone Him? The Jews said to Christ: “For a good work we do not stone You, but for **blasphemy**, and because **You, being a Man, make Yourself God**” (vs. 33, emp. added; cf. 5:17-18).
- After Jesus rose from the dead, the apostle Thomas called Jesus, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Jesus responded: “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (vs. 29). Notice that Jesus did not deny His deity, rather He acknowledged Thomas’ faith and commended future believers. Believers in what? In that which Thomas had just confessed—that Jesus is Lord and God.

It was in the overall context of John’s gospel account, which is filled with statements testifying of Jesus’ deity, that the apostle

recorded Jesus’ prayer to His Father the night of His betrayal (John 17). But how can Jesus’ statement about His Father being “the only true God” (17:3) be harmonized with statements by Jesus, the apostle John, John the Baptizer, Thomas, etc. affirming the deity of Christ? When a person understands that Jesus’ statement was made in opposition to the world’s false gods, and not Himself, the reference to the Father being “the only true God” harmonizes perfectly with the many scriptures that attest to the deity of Christ (including those outside of the book of John; cf. Matthew 1:23; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:5-13). On the eve of Jesus’ crucifixion, it was completely natural for Him to pray that “all flesh/people” (John 17:2, NKJV/NIV), many of whom were (and still are) pagan idolaters, would come to know “the only true God” and receive eternal life (17:3). Thus, Jesus contrasted Himself not with the Father, but “with all forms of pagan polytheism, mystic pantheism, and philosophic naturalism” (Jamieson, et al., 1997).

Furthermore, if Jesus’ reference to the Father being “the only true God” somehow excludes Jesus from being deity, then (to be consistent) Jesus also must be disqualified from being man’s Savior. Jehovah said: “Besides me there is no savior” (Isaiah 43:11; cf. Hosea 13:4; Jude 25). Yet, Paul and Peter referred to Jesus as our “Savior” several times in their inspired writings (Ephesians 5:23; Philippians 3:20; 2 Timothy 1:10; 2 Peter 1:1, 11; 2:20; etc.). Also, if Jesus is excluded from Godhood (based on a misinterpretation of John 17:3), then, pray tell, must God the Father be excluded from being man’s Lord? To the church at Ephesus, Paul wrote that there is

“**one** Lord” (4:4, emp. added), and, according to Jude 4 (using Jehovah’s Witnesses own New World Translation) “our **only** Owner and Lord” is “Jesus Christ” (emp. added). Yet, in addition to Jesus being called Lord throughout the New Testament, so is God the Father (Matthew 11:25; Luke 1:32; Acts 1:25) and the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17).

Obviously, when the Bible reveals that there is only one God, one Savior, one Lord, one Creator (Isaiah 44:24; John 1:3), etc., reason and revelation demand that we understand the inspired writers to be excluding everyone and everything—other than the triune God. As former Jehovah’s Witness David Reed explained: “Jesus’ being called our ‘only’ Lord does not rule out the Lordship of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and the Father’s being called the ‘only’ true God does not exclude the Son and the Holy Spirit from deity” (1986, p. 82).

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Why would God Punish America Before He would Punish Hindu or Islamic Nations?

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

ESENTIALLY, this question was asked by the ancient Hebrew prophet Habakkuk. When he complained to God regarding the corruption of his nation and inquired how long God would tolerate it, God informed him that He was bringing the Chaldeans against the nation to punish them. But this divine response perplexed the prophet, causing him to make a second inquiry: “Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, and hold Your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he?” (1:3). In other words, yes, Israel deserved punishment, but why inflict that punishment using a nation even more wicked than Israel—a polytheistic, pagan nation? God’s answer was that, in His own good time, He would ultimately deal with the more wicked nation as well.

What is unique about America is the fact that it was borne amid an almost unanimous desire to possess the favor of the God of the Bible in the establishment of the Republic. The Founders repeatedly expressed their concern that Christianity (what they repeatedly styled “true religion”) be maintained among the citizenry in order to retain divine assistance (Miller, 2010). This basic orientation was sustained as a national attitude for over 150 years. After World War II, sinister efforts were well underway to strip God and Christianity from civil, judicial, and educational institutions (Miller, 2008).

Unlike Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, and polytheistic, pagan countries—which do not claim to be “Christian”—America has been recognized the world over as a “Christian nation.” We have been blessed accordingly—beyond all other nations in human history.

America’s origins so positioned her among the nations of the Earth that, in effect, many would see God’s reputation as “on the line.” Do we think He would allow America to jettison Christian values, flaunt moral degradation, and defiantly boast to the world that America is “tolerant” of perversion and immorality—without calling her to account before the world? As prominent Founder George Mason, often called “The Father of the Bill of Rights,” stated at the Constitutional Convention: “As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world, so they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities” (as quoted in Madison, 1840, 3:1391, emp. added; of course, God’s timetable varies from human expectation, so any future retribution is unpredictable as to timing).

The Founders understood this principle emphatically. Take, for example, prominent Founding Father John Witherspoon. Serving as President of Princeton from 1768 to 1776, Witherspoon served on both the Provincial Congress of New Jersey as well as the Continental Congress (1776-1782) where he signed the *Declaration of Independence*. After the Revolutionary War, he was a member of the New Jersey State Assembly as well as a member of the State ratification convention for the federal *Constitution*. In a treatise titled “The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men,” written the same year the Founders declared their independence, this quintessential Founder insightfully observed:

It is the prerogative of God to do what he will with his own; but he often displays his justice itself, by

throwing into the furnace those, who, though they may not be visibly worse than others, **may yet have more to answer for**, as having been favoured with more distinguished privileges, both civil and sacred (1776, emp. added).

America has been blessed with so many more privileges and blessings than other nations. But our moral decline seems to be proportional to those blessings. America has a lot to answer for. It’s only a question of time—unless a massive, nationwide, spiritual awakening is forthcoming. That is precisely what America most desperately needs—not a stronger economy, not more handouts, and not more concern for the environment. She needs to repent and fall before the God of Heaven and beg His forgiveness.

Now do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves to the LORD; and enter His sanctuary, which He has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of His wrath may turn away from you (2 Chronicles 30:8). Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him (Psalm 2:12).

But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, and the nations will not be able to endure His indignation (Jeremiah 10:10).

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Seeing the Designer in Shrimp Vision

Kyle Butt, M.A.

Humans have amazing eyesight. In fact, many camera companies have looked to the eye in an effort to glean useful information in developing better photographic and video technology. As effective as the human eye is, however, there are certain things it cannot do. One of those is to detect ultraviolet light. But researchers have recently discovered a creature with the amazing ability to detect ultraviolet light—the mantis shrimp.

Mantis shrimp are some of the most interesting creatures in the water. They have extremely powerful claws and lightening fast reflexes. But their ability to see ultraviolet light makes their eyesight one of the most remarkable abilities in the animal kingdom. Michael Bok, one of the researchers studying mantis shrimp vision stated: “The overall construction of the mantis shrimp’s visual system is just so unbelievably ridiculous, so this is just another piece of that tapestry” (Pappas, 2014). What makes their vision “unbelievably ridiculous” is that they have 12 photoreceptors in their eyes, while humans only have three (2014). Another interesting element to their vision is that the shrimp uses amino acids that act

as sunscreen in their eyes to help them see ultraviolet light.

The design behind mantis shrimp vision, according to those doing the work on it, is “unbelievably ridiculous,” meaning of course that it is so advanced that it takes a team of researchers just to try to understand it, much less figure out a way to copy the technology. Those who contend that the mantis shrimp is a product of evolutionary changes that have taken place over millions of years cannot explain how such advanced capabilities could reside in the shrimp. No amount of mindless tinkering could produce such

highly sensitive instruments as mantis shrimp eyes.

The most reasonable explanation for mantis shrimp vision is that an intelligent Creator, Who sees all things (including ultraviolet light), designed the shrimp and its complex eye. When brilliant human researchers come away from such “technology” in awe of the abilities of mantis shrimp vision, the obvious conclusion to draw is that the Designer of such vision possesses an intelligence far superior to that of the humans involved in the research. When the Proverbs writer stated: “The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made both of them” (Proverbs 20:12), that would certainly include a “seeing eye” that uses amino acids as sunscreen and 12 photoreceptors to see light that humans cannot.

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SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

September 18-20	Orlando, FL	407-620-7510
September 21-22	Decatur County, TN	334-272-8558

Eric Lyons

September 23-24	Decatur County, TN	(334) 272-8558
September 28	Wetumpka, AL	(334) 567-6561

Dave Miller

September 5-7	Somerville, TN	(901) 465-2632
September 12-14	Rockledge, FL	(321) 632-7349
September 19	Denver, CO	(303) 986-4521
September 26-28	Crossville, TN	(931) 484-5297

Jeff Miller

September 4,25	San Angelo, TX	(334) 272-8558
September 11,18	Montgomery, AL	(334) 272-8558



NOTE FROM *The Editor*



New DVD: *Science vs. Evolution*

Apologetics Press continually strives to generate products that promote the cause of Christ and refute the ploys of Satan to subvert souls. Atheistic evolution has certainly been a prominent myth by which many have been drawn away from the Almighty. From its inception, A.P. has waged aggressive warfare with the forces of evolution in an effort to demonstrate its unscientific nature in contrast with the perfectly plausible biblical account of Creation. To that end, we are very pleased to announce the release of a new DVD that we believe provides tremendous assistance in ascertaining the truth about evolution.

Resident A.P. scientist Dr. Jeff Miller (Ph.D. from Auburn University) explores the laws of science, comparing them to the claims of naturalistic evolution. He meticulously examines the alleged “evidences” for Darwinian evolution. He even answers the question: “If the evidence doesn’t support atheistic evolution, why do so many believe in it?” This two-DVD set contains eight 35 minute sessions with the following titles:

- Session I: What is Evolution, and Why Does it Matter?
- Session II: Can Evolution Get Something from Nothing?

- Session III: Did the Universe Cause Itself?
- Session IV: Can Life Come from Non-life...and Turn into You?
- Session V: Do Science Textbooks Prove Evolution?
- Session VI: Do Fossils Prove Evolution?
- Session VII: Do Dating Techniques Prove the Earth is Old?
- Session VIII: Why Be an Evolutionist?

You will want to secure your copy, as well as copies for youth and others in your acquaintance who need to be equipped with this information.

On another note: the 2014 A.P. Christian Evidences Summer Camp is now history. Over 200 campers were blessed by this outstanding event. See the report in the centerspread of this issue of *R&R*. You may want to make your plans to be a part of the 2015 camp which will center on the theme: The Deity of Christ.



Dave Miller

See the Center Spread
for More Details